

### III.B.1.a

**TO:** Mayor Rosemarie Ives  
Redmond City Council

**FROM:** Roberta Lewandowski, Planning Director, 556-2447  
Rob Odle, Policy Planning Manager, 556-2417  
Terry Marpert, Principal Planner, 556-2428

**DATE:** January 18, 2005

**SUBJECT:** City of Redmond Comments on the *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)*

The City of Redmond has the opportunity to comment on Sound Transit's Draft SEIS on the update to the 1996 Regional Transit Long-Range Plan, and staff is seeking your input on the comments to be sent to Sound Transit. This memo contains background information on the Long-Range Plan and provides a draft letter from the City commenting on the Draft SEIS. There will be further opportunities later this year for the City to comment on both Sound Transit Phase 2 and on updates to the Long-Range Plan itself.

#### **Introduction/Background**

Sound Transit is in the process of updating its 1996 *Regional Transit Long-Range Vision* (referred to as the Long-Range Plan), which serves as "the general outline for improving high capacity transit options throughout central Puget Sound."<sup>1</sup> The Long-Range Plan was adopted in 1996 together with the first phase of the regional transit system known as *Sound Move* (see Attachment A).

Sound Transit released a Draft SEIS on December 2, 2004 to supplement previous environmental work done for the 1996 plan. The SEIS analyzes new Long-Range Plan alternatives, including monorail and bus rapid transit technologies, together with light rail, as high capacity transit (HCT) options for service to the Eastside and Redmond. The SEIS analyzes the following plan alternatives:

- No Action Alternative – No additional HCT and regional express bus service beyond the completion of Phase 1, Sound Move, as seen in Attachment B.
- Regional Transit Long-Range Plan Alternative (Plan Alternative) – This includes improvements and expansion beyond the No Action Alternative, and is depicted in Attachment C.

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<sup>1</sup> Sound Transit, *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)*, December 2, 2004, Figure 1.1.

- Adding Options to the Plan Alternative – This is a menu of various transit alternatives that could be added to the Plan Alternative. Options examined include light rail or monorail HCT across SR 520 between Seattle and Redmond and a new regional express bus route between Issaquah and Redmond, through Sammamish, as seen in Attachment D.

The work on the SEIS is part of a larger Sound Transit program to develop a new Phase 2 plan, called “ST 2,” to carry the regional transit system to a new level beyond Sound Move. The Sound Transit Board must first update the 1996 Long-Range Plan, which is expected to occur in June 2005, after release of the Final SEIS.

After the Long-Range Plan is updated, Sound Transit staff will begin working to develop ST 2, with the Sound Transit Board expecting to adopt ST 2 in May 2006. The earliest date for a public vote on ST 2 is expected to be in the fall of 2006.

Key attributes and benefits of an updated Long-Range Plan, as listed in the SEIS, include:<sup>2</sup>

- An expanded HCT system will offer the public an alternative to automobile travel, particularly at peak travel times in congested corridors;
- Regional growth in population and employment centers (such as Downtown Redmond and Overlake) will require a viable HCT system;
- HCT is expected to slow the rate of growth in both motor vehicle trips and traffic congestion;
- Increased investment in regional HCT will substantially decrease travel times for transit users.

The Draft SEIS may be viewed at the Sound Transit website at [www.soundtransit.org](http://www.soundtransit.org).

### **City of Redmond Review and Comment on the SEIS**

Sound Transit is conducting a public outreach program this month to gather comments on the Draft SEIS for the Long-Range Plan, and is hosting a series of public meetings throughout the region. Meeting information may be found in Attachment E. All comments are due by January 31, 2005.

Staff has prepared a draft comment letter for your review for submittal to Sound Transit (Attachment F). Comments focus on three areas: ridership and costs; a fixed-guideway bus rapid transit alternative; and, selection of a preferred technology and corridor. Tonight staff is looking for direction to submit the letter as drafted or to modify it as you may direct.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 4.9-2.

## 1996 Regional Transit Long-Range Vision

Sound Transit adopted the Regional Transit Long-Range Vision in 1996, when it also adopted the *Sound Move* program to build the first phase of the regional transit system. The Vision functions as and is referred to in this SEIS as Sound Transit's Long-Range Plan. It has served as the general outline for improving high capacity transit options throughout central Puget Sound.

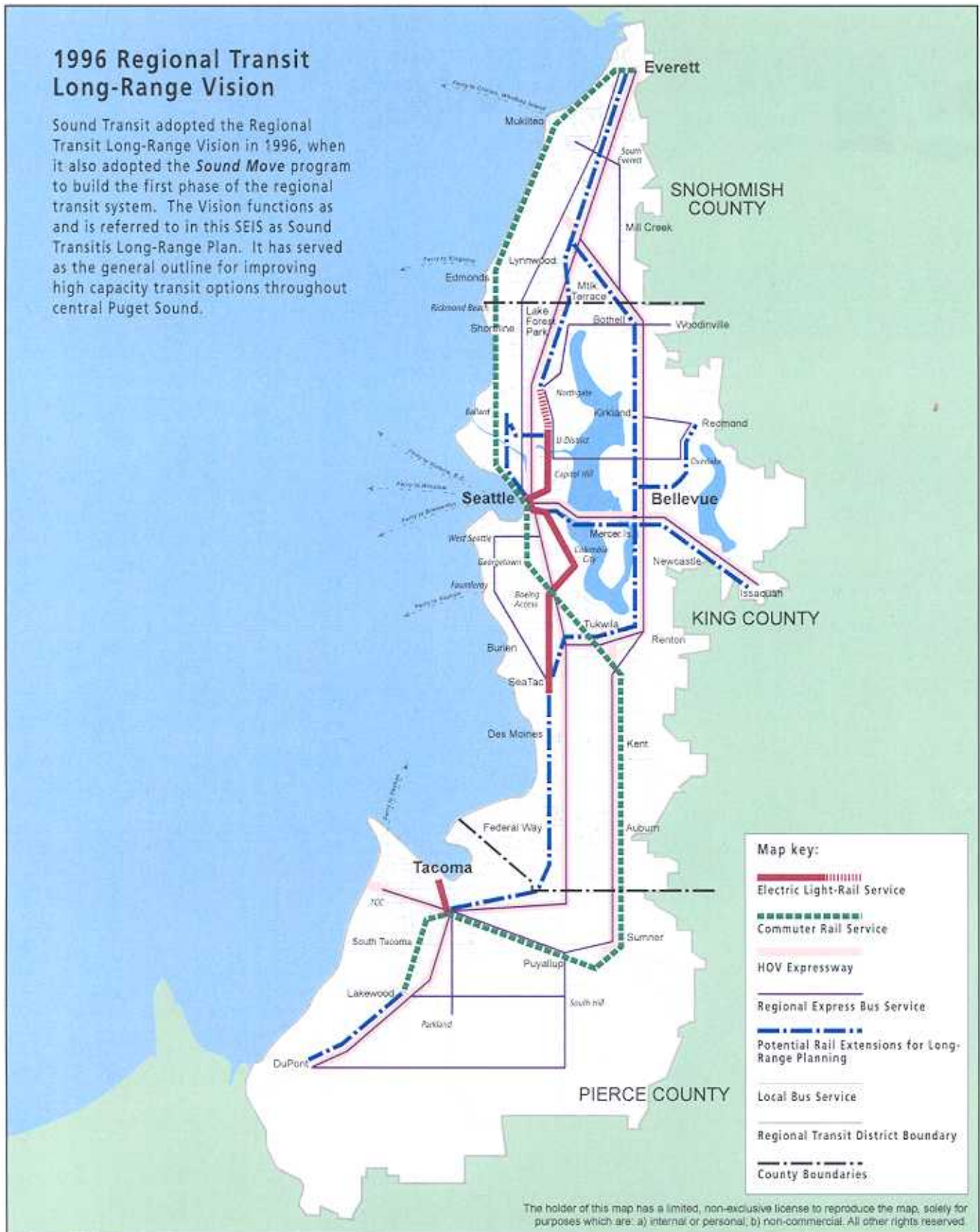
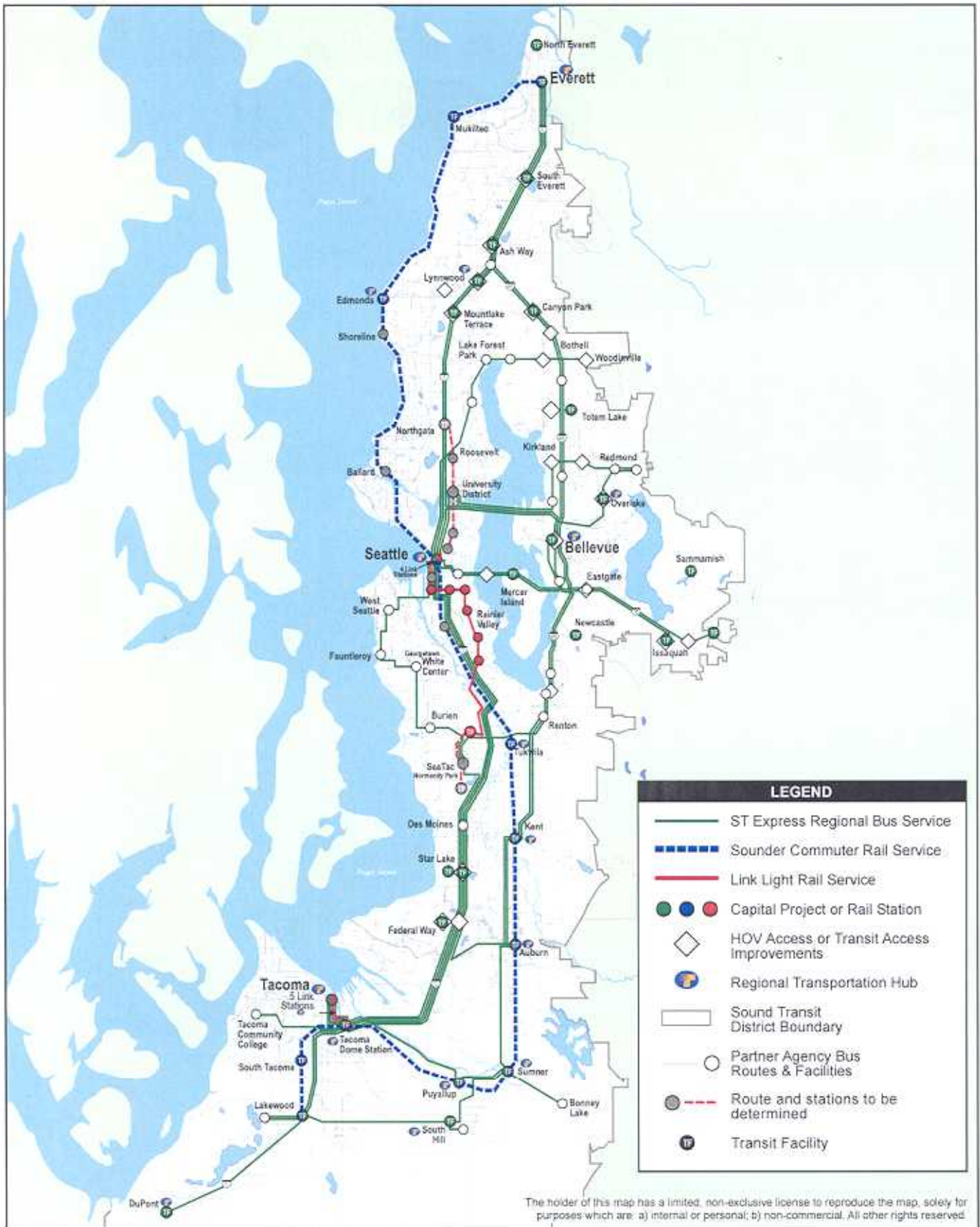
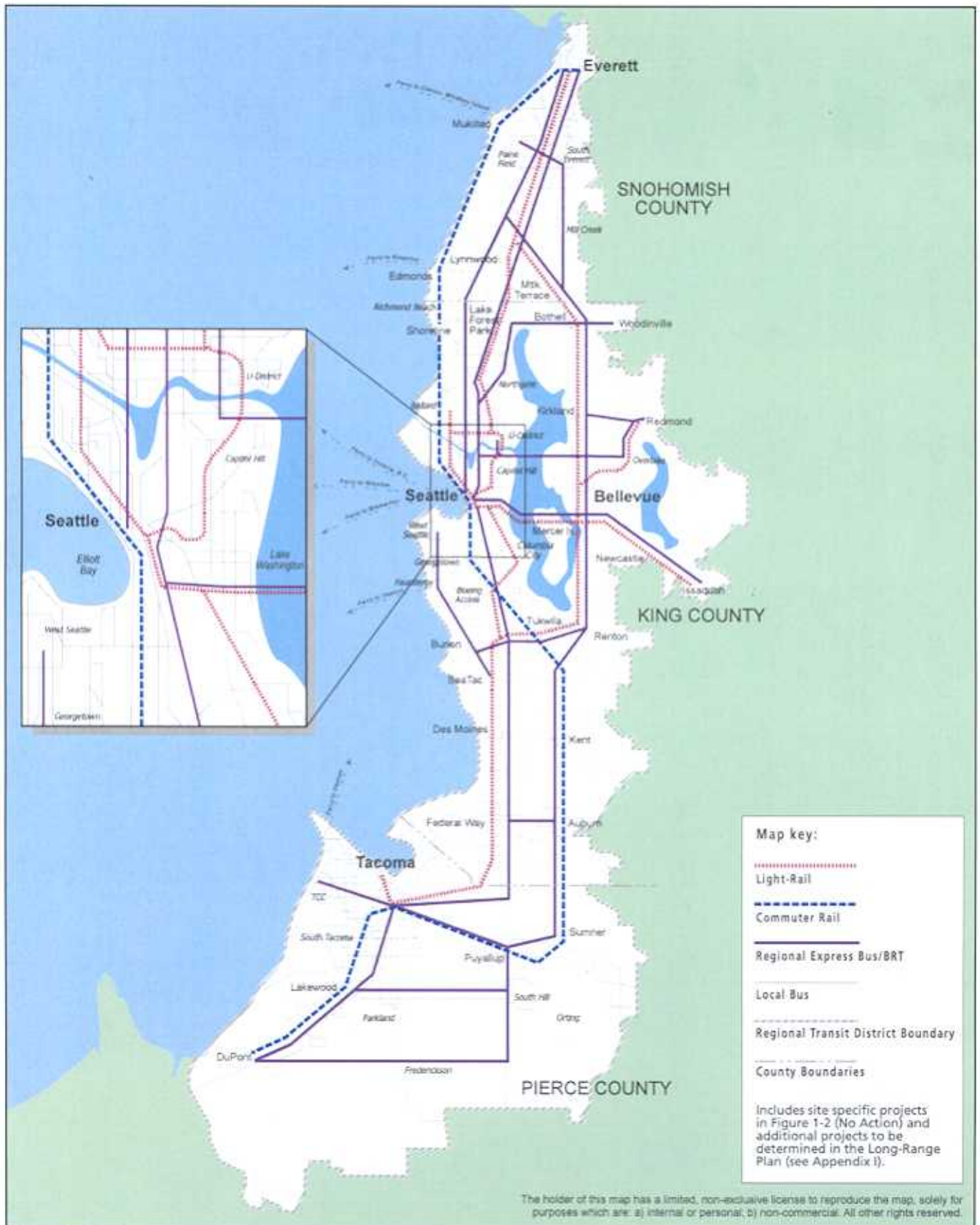


Figure 1-1  
1996 Regional Transit  
Long-Range Vision



**Figure 1-2**  
**No Action Alternative: Assumed Regional**  
**Transit Network with Sound Move**



**Figure 1-3**  
Regional Transit  
Long-Range Plan Alternative



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**Figure 1-4**  
Regional Transit Long-Range  
Plan Alternative Options

# The Next Wave

Connecting the Region

**Help shape the future of regional mass transit!** Sound Transit has released a Draft SEIS. View the DSEIS and find out how to comment at [www.soundtransit.org](http://www.soundtransit.org). Comments are due January 31, 2005.

**Pick a meeting near you.**  
All meetings from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Monday, January 10**  
**Seattle**  
Union Station  
(Board Room)  
401 S. Jackson Street

**Wednesday, January 12**  
**Bellevue**  
Bellevue First  
Congregational Church  
700 108th Avenue NE

**Thursday, January 13**  
**Shoreline**  
Shoreline Conference  
Center  
(Shoreline Room)  
18560 1st Avenue NE

**Tuesday, January 18**  
**Everett**  
Everett Station

(Weyerhaeuser Room)  
3201 Smith Avenue

**Wednesday, January 19**  
**Tacoma**  
Washington State  
History Museum  
(Mezzanine)  
1911 Pacific Avenue

**Thursday, January 20**  
**Lakewood**  
Lakewood City Hall  
(Council Chambers)  
6000 Main Street SW

**Monday, January 24**  
**Federal Way**  
Federal Way Regional  
Library  
34200 1st Way S.



**Tuesday, January 25**  
**Lynnwood**  
Lynnwood High School  
(Cafeteria)  
3001 184th Street SW

**Wednesday, January 26**  
**Issaquah**  
King County Libraries  
Service Center  
960 Newport Way NW

**Thursday, January 27**  
**Auburn**  
Auburn City Hall  
(Council Chambers)  
25 West Main

**Questions?**

[main@soundtransit.org](mailto:main@soundtransit.org) | [www.soundtransit.org](http://www.soundtransit.org)  
(206) 398-5000 | (800) 201-4900 | (888) 713-6030 TTY

**SOUNDTRANSIT**  
RIDE THE WAVE

## Attachment F

January 18, 2005

Steve Kennedy  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Sound Transit  
Union Station  
401 S. Jackson Street  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Subject: City of Redmond Comments on the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan, Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), December 2004**

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

We would like to thank Sound Transit for providing the opportunity to comment on the Draft SEIS for the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan. The Redmond City Council reviewed key parts of the SEIS, the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan, and the Plan Alternative Options at its meeting on January 18. We are pleased to see a full set of high capacity transit technologies and alignments considered in your planning documents.

Based on information from Sound Transit staff, we recognize that the SEIS is the first of several environmental documents and plans that Sound Transit will issue this year and next. Therefore, the comments contained in this letter reflect our desire to bring Redmond's high capacity transit policy issues to the table. Therefore, we have the following comments:

**1. Ridership and Costs.**

The SEIS does not differentiate between the various HCT rail technologies (light rail, monorail) in forecasting ridership and costs for each of the HCT corridors (p. 4.9-44). We want all of the facts available before decisions are made on the Long-Range Plan. Specific analysis and data must allow for a comparison of bus, light rail and monorail technology in terms of ridership and costs, for both the I-90 and SR 520 corridors connecting to the Eastside. We strongly support considering light rail and monorail technologies for service on SR 520 and incorporation into the Long-Range Plan Alternative. HCT analysis must further examine: the potential to handle growth in ridership, operational reliability, travel time, operational requirements, street and land use issues, and other impacts to the built and natural environment.

**2. Fixed-Guideway Bus Rapid Transit.**

A detailed analysis of fixed-guideway bus rapid transit operating on the same alignment as light rail and monorail technologies is necessary. This permits a fair assessment of the relative impacts of bus technology, in comparison with light rail and monorail technologies, operating between Seattle and Downtown Redmond. This comparison will help the public understand the merits of one technology

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Senior Environmental Planner  
Sound Transit  
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compared to another on a common alignment. This is consistent with City of Bellevue comments made to Paul Matsuoka.

**3. Selection of a Preferred HCT Corridor and Technology.**

Detailed cost, ridership, and other environmental data requested in #2 and #3 above must be available for all HCT corridors and technologies before a decision is made on the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan and on Sound Transit Phase 2. Please describe how and when this analysis and examination of data will be completed.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the SEIS. Please contact Terry Marpert, Principal Planner, at (425) 556-2428, or [tmarpert@redmond.gov](mailto:tmarpert@redmond.gov), should you have any questions about the issues and comments raised in this letter.

Sincerely,

ROSEMARIE IVES  
Mayor, City of Redmond

NANCY MCCORMICK  
President, Redmond City Council